



Mental Health and Addiction Treatment Data Breaches Reported to HHS

Original analysis of 8,016 records from the HHS Office for Civil Rights, October 2009 – September 2026 (submission dates). Published October 15, 2026. <https://settlementinsight.com/research/mental-health-provider-data-breaches>

Mental health and addiction treatment organizations filed 210 breach reports with the HHS Office for Civil Rights between October 2009 and September 2026, covering 10.3 million affected individuals. That is 2.6% of all 8,016 reports on the federal breach portal in the same period. The count is a lower bound: it includes only organizations whose reported name identifies them as a behavioral health provider.

210

Reports from MH and addiction providers (lower bound)

10.3M

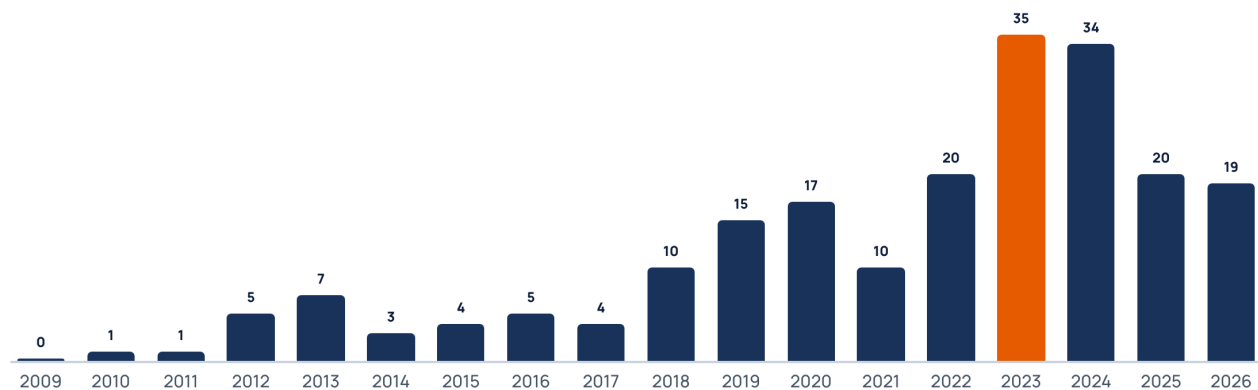
Individuals affected (sum of reports)

83%

Reports classed as hacking, 2021–2025



Mental health and addiction breach reports by submission year



Source: Settlement Insight analysis of data from the HHS Office for Civil Rights
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What the HHS breach reports show

- 1. Reports tripled.** Mental health and addiction organizations filed 119 reports in 2021–2025, against 38 in 2015–2019 (3.1×). Their share of all HHS reports rose from 1.4% in 2010–2014 to 3.2% in 2021–2025.
- 2. From stolen laptops to hacking.** In 2010–2014, 82% of these reports were thefts and 6% were hacking. In 2021–2025, hacking/IT incidents accounted for 83%.

3. **One report is nearly a third of the total.** The largest single report, filed by Cerebral, Inc. in 2023, lists 3.2 million individuals, 31% of the total. Reports of 100,000 or more individuals (19 of them) account for 76%.
4. **Business associates behind half the exposure.** Organizations filing as HIPAA business associates submitted only 20 of the reports but 52% of the affected individuals. Brightline alone filed 11 separate reports covering 1,013,686 individuals.
5. **California and Texas lead the count.** California organizations filed 26 reports, the most among the organizations our name filter matches, although the filter misses several Texas community mental health centers named "MHMR"; reporting organizations came from 42 states. Counts are not adjusted for population or number of providers.

How we measured

Data come from the HHS Office for Civil Rights breach portal, which lists breaches of unsecured protected health information affecting 500 or more individuals that covered entities report under Section 13402 of the HITECH Act. We used both the current list (under investigation) and the archive, as imported on 2026-10-14, limited to reports submitted through 2026-09-30. Identical rows (same organization, submission date, count and breach type) were counted once; this removed 5 rows and left 8,016 reports in the full register.

A report is counted as mental health or addiction treatment when the reporting organization's name contains one of these terms: behavioral, behavioural, mental health, psych, counseling, counselling, addiction, substance, alcohol, drug abuse, detox, recovery center, or the company names Brightline and Cerebral. We removed names that pair the term with general medical care (a general hospital, a combined county health and mental health department, mixed medical practices) and names referring to cerebral palsy. Every match was reviewed by hand.

Counts are reports, not distinct incidents or organizations: the 210 reports were filed under 176 differently named entities. Affected individuals are the sum of the counts HHS lists for each report. Years are calendar years of the submission date. Breach types are the categories HHS lists in the breach_type field; a report counts as theft or as hacking/IT incident when that category appears in the field, alone or combined with others (for example "Theft, Unauthorized Access/Disclosure"), so category shares can overlap. To check the extraction, we counted all reports submitted in 2023: 745, against the 746 HHS reported to Congress (0.13% difference).

Checked against published figures

- All breach reports affecting 500+ individuals submitted to the HHS OCR breach portal in calendar year 2023: published 746, our count 745 (0.13% apart). [Annual Report to Congress on Breaches of Unsecured Protected Health Information for Calendar Year 2023](#)

Limitations

- The name filter misses mental health and addiction providers whose names carry none of the terms (for example Texas community centers named "MHMR", Centerstone, or Gateway Rehabilitation Center), and all behavioral health units inside general hospitals and health systems. The totals are therefore a lower bound.

- The sum of affected individuals counts notifications, not unique people: one person can appear in several reports, and HHS figures are the organization's own estimate at the time of reporting, sometimes revised later.
- HHS posts reports after review, so reports submitted in recent months, including in 2025 and 2026, may still be added. The partial year 2026 is shown separately and not compared with full years.
- A report on the portal is not a finding of a HIPAA violation, and the data do not say whether the breach involved therapy notes, substance use disorder records or only billing and contact data.

Data files

- [The 25 largest mental health and addiction breach reports](#) (CSV, 25 rows)
- [Mental health and addiction breach reports by breach type](#) (CSV, 7 rows)
- [Mental health and addiction breach reports by HIPAA entity type](#) (CSV, 3 rows)
- [Mental health and addiction breach reports by state](#) (CSV, 43 rows)
- [Mental health and addiction breach reports by year](#) (CSV, 18 rows)

How to cite

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